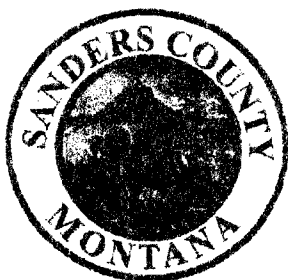


EXHIBIT 10  
DATE 2/9/07  
HB 444

# SANDERS COUNTY

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

February 8, 2007

House Appropriation Committee  
Montana House of Representatives

RE: HB443 and HB444

Dear Chairman Sinrud:

I have been a member of the Clark Fork River Basin and Task Force since it was formed in 2001.

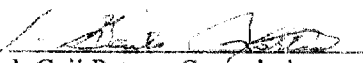
Sanders County is the location of the Pennsylvania Power and Light (PPL) Thompson Falls Dam and the Avista Noxon Dam, who hold water rights greater than the flow of the Clark Fork River most the year. These rights are prior to a fair percentage of the sprinkler irrigated land in the Clark Fork Basin.

The Thompson Falls co-generation plant which was denied a water permit for 400 acre feet water by the Department of Natural Resource and Conservation (DNRC) upon protest by Avista is also in Sanders County.

Montana should have long ago laid claim to the million acre feet that has been available to use since the Hungry Horse Dam was built in the late 1940's by the Bureau of Reclamation. It puts us ahead of some of the down stream demands of Columbia Basin water from the three and one half million Hungry Horse Reservoir and can be used to augment the rights of the two power companies.

The dollars requested by HB443 and HB444 are an extremely good timely investment for Montana's future water needs in the competition for Columbia Basin water rights.

Sincerely,

  
J. Gail Patton, Commissioner  
Board of Commissioners  
Sanders County, Montana